

# Inclusion Environments vs. Self-Contained Environments

What they look like and why you need both.

# Inclusion Environments

## Pros

- Promotes the idea of giving people with special needs a place to belong
- Does not require a specialized area to get a special needs ministry started
- Allows ministry leaders the ability to focus on training people rather than preaching/teaching/adapting curriculum on Sunday
- Provides a model of behavior and learning

## Cons

- Not appropriate for all students
- Difficult to manage volunteers if you have multiple meeting areas within your church building
- More difficult to address inappropriate behaviors and teach acceptable behaviors

# Inclusion Environments

## Pros

- It's free! No budget required
- Creates a place where differences are celebrated, not separated
- People with disabilities receive the same gospel as everyone else
- Creates room for growth of the ministry

## Cons

- Requires environment accommodations for each person
- Requires intentional education among the typical population (congregation, staff, and volunteers)
- You must prepare for inclusion in every area to be the standard
- Usually requires one-on-one buddies for each child, so recruiting is never ending

# Creating a Culture of Inclusion



## Worship Services

The goal of inclusion is to walk into a worship service and not be able to pick out the person with disabilities.



## Camps & Retreats

We provide one-on-one buddies for all weekend retreats and overnight camps.



## Special Events

Our children and youth are involved in inclusive events such as productions, youth choir, Eggfest, and Festival on the Mount.



# Self-Contained Environments

## Pros

- Provides a place to get to know new children
- Unifies the people involved in the ministry
- Allows the ministry leader/pastor to establish and grow relationships
- Provides a less stimulating environment

## Cons

- Lowers the expectation for some people
- Gives a sense of seclusion/”hiding”
- Prevents socialization with people without disabilities
- Typically does not have a credentialed pastor teaching the gospel

# Self-Contained Environments

## Pros

- Provides a calming place for overstimulation or “meltdowns”
- Design can be catered to the people’s needs in the ministry
- Needed resources can be stored in designated area
- Can be expensive to build

## Cons

- Bible lessons and worship require modifications
- Limits physical space for growth
- “Out of sight, out of mind”

# Types of Self-Contained Rooms

## Activity Rooms

Need to be age appropriate

Include energy-releasing activities

Include sensory activities

Include items for anxiety

## Classroom

Distraction Free

Alternative Seating

Combination of table and floor time

Include designated areas for worship and lessons

## Sensory Room

Calming, low-light environment

Secure area

Durable Items

# Activity Rooms



Age Appropriate Activities such as games, books, and movies

Various Seating Options

Calming Features



Include energy expending activities such as trampolines or scooter boards

Feature sensory activities such as a sensory wall or textured items



Make it personal! Include something for every child

Keep inclusion supplies handy

Consider the design of the space



# Youth Activity Rooms



Age appropriate furniture and vibe

Various seating options

Be aware of textures



Include energy expending activities such as trampolines

Have sensory activities readily available such as therapy brushes, thera-putty, and fidget toys that are discreet



Make it personal! Include something for every child

Keep inclusion supplies handy

Consider the design of the space

# Modified Classroom



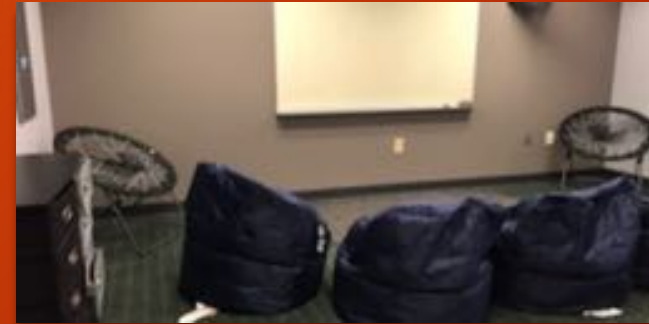
Adaptable to any age

Few design distractions - minimalist design



Varied seating/standing options for working

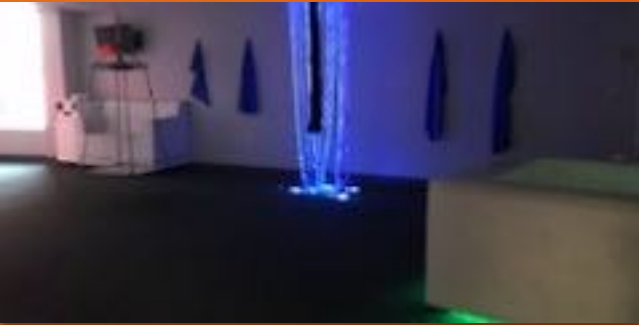
Displays for scripture memory, crafts, and behavior expectations



Storage for supplies

Options for digital teaching aids

# Sensory Room



Primarily for calming purposes

Lots of sensory related items/activities

Include items for specific disabilities such as vibro-acoustic seating



Bubble tubes

Sensory wall panels

Swaddling objects such as body sox or cocoon swings

Specialized lighting



Bean Bag seating

Calming music

Crash pads

Calming projector scenes